

ABSTRACT

A method for identifying a specific communications protocol used in a vehicle's on-board diagnostic system, wherein the method is implemented using a handheld automotive diagnostic device and cable having a first and second connector, wherein the cable has unique physical layer features that may be correlated to a specific communications protocol. The method comprises connecting the first connector to an input/output connector on the diagnostic device; powering up and initializing the diagnostic device; retrieving cable identification data unique to the physical layer features of the cable; and comparing the retrieved cable identification data with at least one look-up table to identify a correlated communications protocol.